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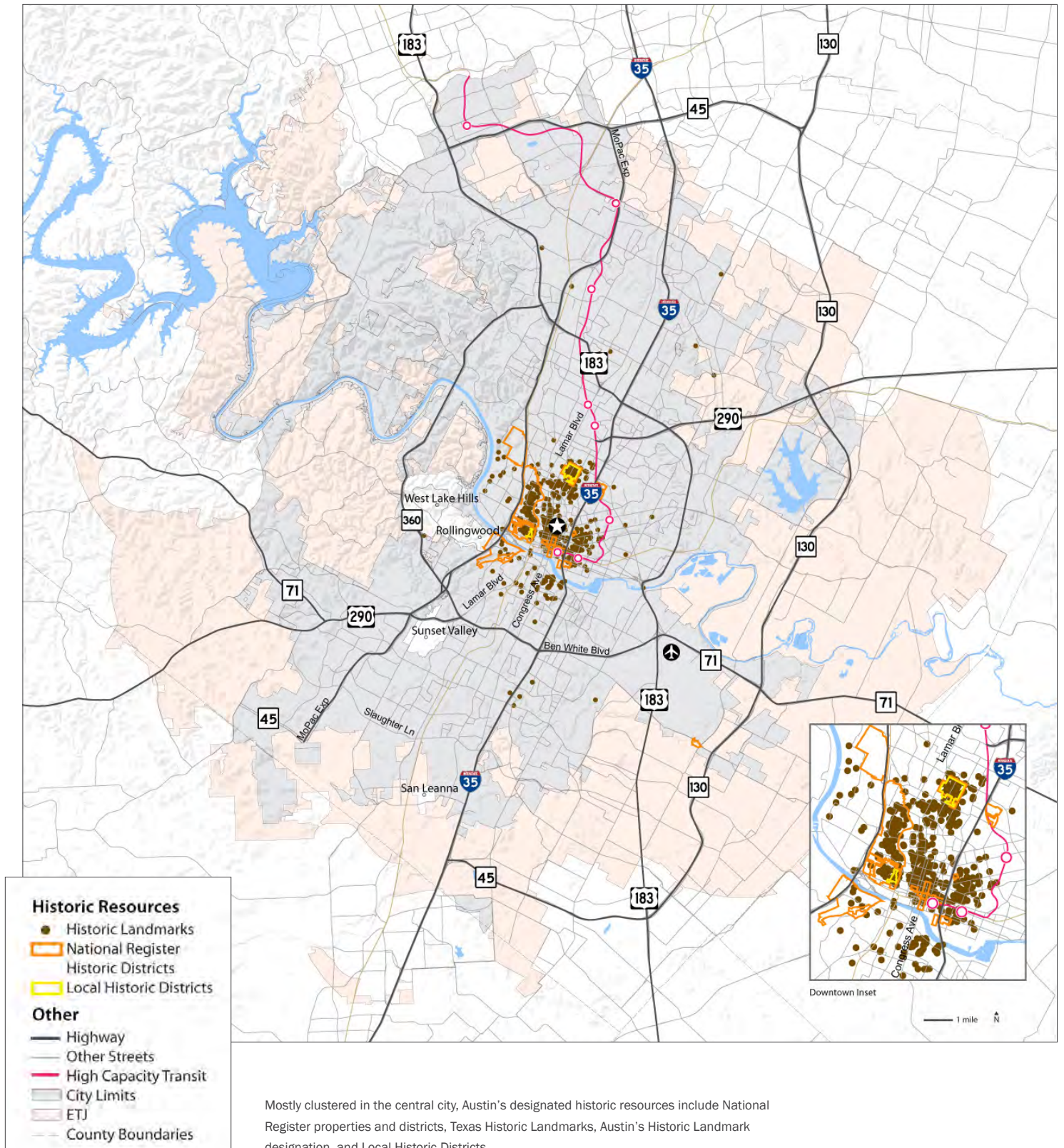
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Figure 4.7 Historic and Cultural Resources



MIXED-USE

Live + Work + Shop + Play

In a complete community, mixed-use areas help Austinites conveniently meet a variety of needs in one appealing place.

To grow as a livable community, new development should create lively places. It's a traditional idea: People have always been drawn to town centers where they could see neighbors, shop, find work, sell their goods, worship, and visit over a meal or a drink. Historically, small Texas towns developed around a courthouse square. In bigger cities like Austin, corner mom-and-pop stores opened at streetcar or bus stops in the heart of a neighborhood. Hyde Park is a good example; the intersection of 42nd and Duval streets continues to thrive as a mixed-use area today, with cafes, shops, and services that make the neighborhood highly attractive, long after streetcar service ceased in the 1940s.

Looking toward the future, we can make more of these special places that keep Austin an interesting place to live.

Well-designed mixed-use areas have attractive streetscapes, pockets of greenery and trees, and public spaces.

Examples of recent walkable, mixed-use Austin developments that draw people to live, work, shop, and dine in one area include The Triangle, the 2nd Street Retail District, and the Domain. Emerging projects include the new Market Center at Mueller and the Seaholm District and the Green Water Treatment Redevelopment District downtown.

Case Study: South Congress Avenue Today



With the exception of the iconic Hills Café and the Bel Air Condominiums, the segment of South Congress Avenue south of Ben White Boulevard is largely characterized by narrow or missing sidewalks with numerous driveway entrances, vacant land, used car lots, self-storage facilities, and single-story commercial and industrial buildings separated from the street by parking lots.

Let's Mix It Up!

Well-designed and scaled mixed-use projects and districts are critical. Good urban design is needed to ensure that new mixed-use projects are:

- Inclusive people places
- Walkable and bikeable
- Transit-oriented
- Safe and lively, all day and into the evening
- Compatible with their neighborhood or district
- Inclusive of small, local businesses
- Appealing places with an Austin character
- Sustainable in all aspects

Enjoyable Features

- Sidewalk cafes and other places to meet up
- Smaller, more affordable homes
- Transit stops, sidewalks, bike lanes
- Great people watching and window shopping
- Lunch spots, coffee shops, and happy-hour choices near work

Case Study: South Congress Avenue In The Future

A reimagined South Congress Avenue could become a place where people living in new development and the adjacent neighborhoods can walk and bicycle to local-serving businesses, access high-quality transit to travel throughout the city, and find new opportunities to interact with other people.

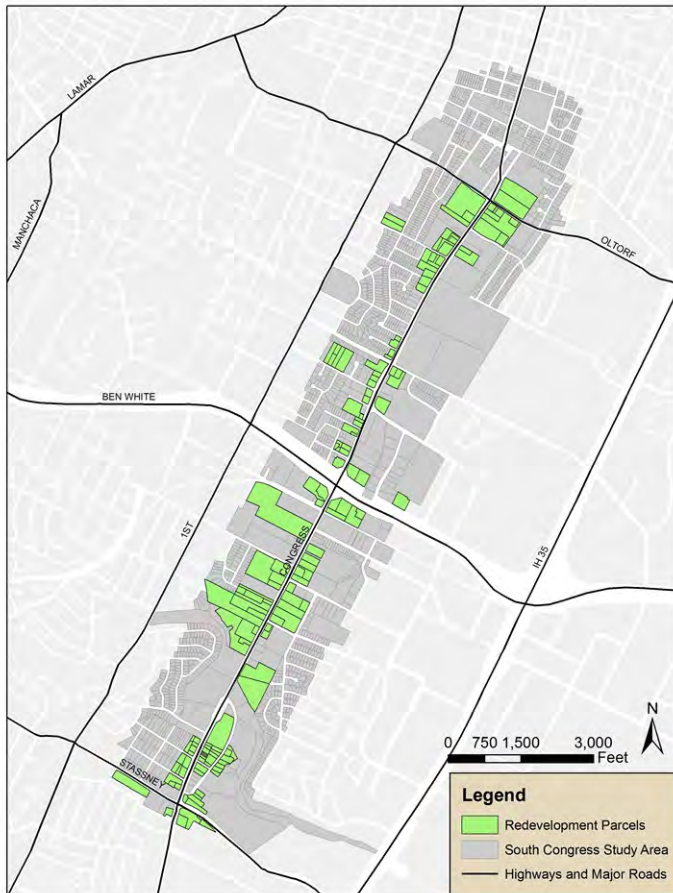
Images: Carter Design Associates.

COMPACT PLACES

Walkable + Sustainable

Gentler on the environment, compact development creates sociable “activity centers” that contribute to our quality of life. The physical form of our city can be a more sustainable, less car-dependent place in the future. That’s the idea behind the compact, connected centers and corridors that organize the *Imagine Austin* Growth Concept Map. Concentrating new development in these compact places supports many diverse goals within this comprehensive plan, across all areas of sustainability—for people, prosperity, and the planet.

Throughout the *Imagine Austin* process, Austinites expressed a desire to create and enrich compact local places, where people of all ages, ethnicities, and income levels can come together and easily meet their everyday needs and desires.

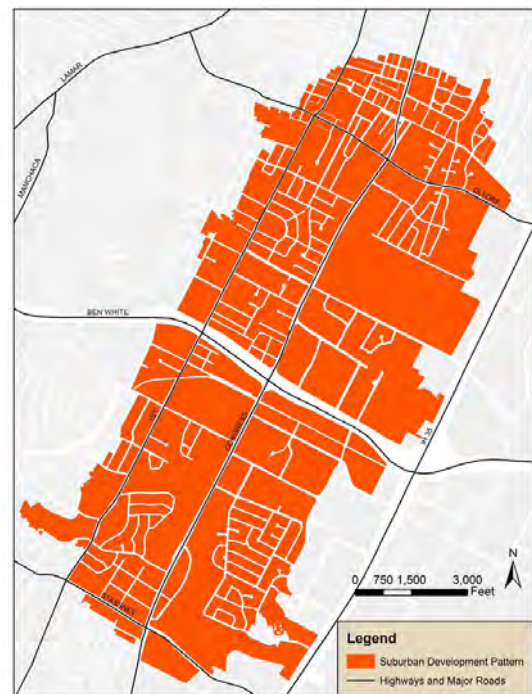


Mixed Use Compact Scenario

Mixed-Use scenario: would allow nearly 15,000 residents on redeveloped multifamily and commercial sites along South Congress Avenue.

Images: AngelouEconomics.

The same number of people would require nine times as much land under the typical suburban development pattern.



Suburban Development Pattern

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Well-designed compact areas with plenty of people, workplaces, and multifamily homes make transit work; they're needed to make frequent, convenient bus and rail service viable. When more people live close to bus and rail stops, transit can run more often and connect more destinations. Compact communities are more supportive of seniors, youths, the disabled, and people who prefer not to drive daily.

Why is compact development more sustainable and eco-friendly? It improves air and water quality and reduces driving. Per person, compact urban areas have a lower carbon footprint than suburban areas. More compact development patterns are lower taxpayer costs for public services, if fewer roads, water and sewer lines, power lines, and other infrastructure are needed to serve far-flung places. Encouraging compact infill projects also reduces development pressures on open space around Austin, helping to support land conservation and environmental protection.

The City completed a study of a section of the **South Congress Avenue Corridor** to better understand the fiscal implications of mixed use, compact development. The study looked at areas more likely to redevelop (based on several assumptions including land values, existing uses, and zoning) and found that compact, mixed-use development would result in an increase of over \$9 million in annual sales and use tax revenue. Street reconstruction and water infrastructure costs to accommodate redevelopment were estimated at about \$55 million over several years, or a payback period of 5-6 years. In addition, the study found that a mixed-use redevelopment scenario is highly efficient in terms of land consumption. **The same number of new jobs and residents can be accommodated in an approximately 200-acre study area compared with a typical suburban pattern that would require about 2,000 acres of land.**

Let's Go Green!

The *Imagine Austin* scenario planning study compared Austin's current development trends with a more compact, mixed use land use pattern (preferred scenario) to accommodate future population and jobs with the following results:

Land Area Consumed

Trend: 161 square miles

Preferred Scenario: -44 square miles

Mixed-use Development

Trend: 45 %

Preferred Scenario: +36%

Daily Vehicle Miles Traveled

Trend: 36.7 million miles

Preferred Scenario: -1.1 million miles

Development in Edwards Aquifer

Trend: 31 square miles

Preferred Scenario: -10 square miles

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Trend: 5.36 million tons

Preferred Scenario: -0.17 million tons

A **compact community** is one in which housing, services, retail, jobs, entertainment, health care, schools, parks, and other daily needs are within a convenient walk or bicycle ride of one another. A compact community is supported by a complete transportation system, encourages healthier lifestyles and community interaction, and allows for more efficient delivery of public services.

COMPLETE STREETS

Drive + Walk + Ride + Bike

By designing for people, not just cars, we can make our streets and roadway corridors more safe, attractive, and welcoming for all. Our streets should work better for all Austinites. The City and its citizens own the roadways and sidewalks—so they need to work for everyone, not just drivers. Complete streets are designed to work well for cars, but also to meet the needs of children walking to school, cyclists, people in wheelchairs trying to catch a bus, rail transit commuters, grandmothers who don't drive, and parents jogging with strollers.

Complete streets support active lifestyles that are better for our health. They allow more people to live car-free and independently. They can also help our economy, spurring private investment and redevelopment.

Complete streets are also connected streets. When the street network is a fully connected grid with relatively short blocks, people have many more choices of routes for each trip. This relieves traffic congestion, as people naturally choose the route best for their trip—along a continuum of choices, from most pedestrian-oriented to most auto-oriented streets. In a complete street network, short, local trips can be taken without burdening the big arterial roadways with more cars.



Complete Street Intersection - Mixed-use

Images: WRT

The multilane boulevard with a median serves a mix of regional and local traffic as well as important transit routes. These types of streets have a strong pedestrian orientation. Curbed islands may provide transit stops and separate bicycles from vehicles near intersections. A row of street trees provide shade for pedestrians and, along with the row of parking, help insulate them from vehicle traffic.

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Complete Street Intersection - Residential

A narrow two-way street for local bicycle and auto traffic. The parking zone and planting zone create a pedestrian friendly street. The connecting alley is a shared space where pedestrians, bicycles, automobiles, and plantings are all at the same grade; also referred to as “woonerf.” This shared space slows and calms traffic and thus improves pedestrian, bicyclist, and driver safety.

By helping to reduce vehicle miles traveled, complete streets and street networks (linked to a complete regional transportation system) support a sustainable future and *Imagine Austin*’s goals for reducing our environmental and carbon footprints.

Successful complete street guidelines, policies, and regulations should achieve and consider the following:

- **Guidelines should be context sensitive.** Guidelines should be adaptable to different areas of Austin and the different scales of neighborhoods and other districts. For example, complete street standards and elements will be different for a downtown street versus a small residential street. The environmental, historic, and cultural context of the local area should also be considered. Guidelines must also reflect plans for future development, including the connected street network described by the Growth Concept Map and small area plans.
- **Establish performance standards.** Complete streets are also about drawing a return on investments, including attracting new development or redevelopment, enhancing mobility for all users, and creating a better environment for users. Tracking data on pedestrian and bicycle counts, measuring building activity, and surveying business owners are examples of ways to measure how a street is performing.
- **Include specific implementation steps.** The implementation of complete streets can occur through regular maintenance and/or major capital improvement projects. Property owners can also contribute to construction of complete streets when redeveloping a site. Guidelines should also consider materials and maintenance issues.
- **Limit places for exclusions.** Not every street can or needs to become a complete street. Exclusions are sometimes necessary, but there should be a high standard for allowing exceptions. For example, specific reasons for not installing sidewalks should be described.

PEOPLE-FRIENDLY PLACES

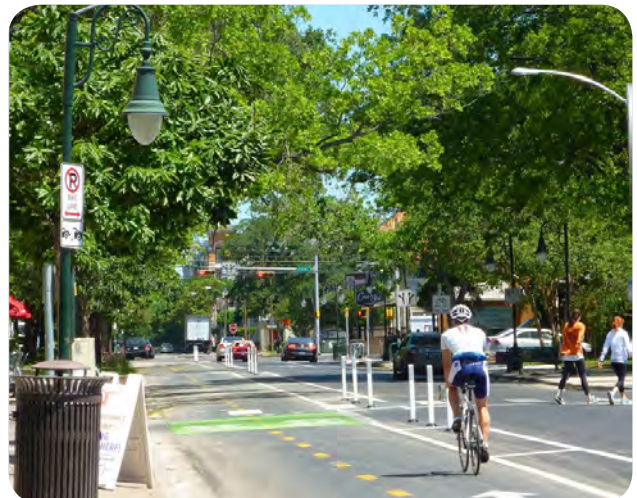
Active + Fun + Attractive

As Austin becomes more compact, creating special urban places where people love to gather can keep our city livable.

We're all drawn to people-friendly places. We have the opportunity to create more of them as Austin grows—places that are active, accessible, comfortable, and sociable. In any city, the places between the buildings need to be designed for people. Great city parks, plazas, trail systems, open-air and farmers markets, streetscapes, waterfronts, gardens, and other public places enhance a city's attractiveness. Well-designed, people-friendly places can beautify our city and its civic realm.

Investments in people-oriented places and parks promote equity; they can be enjoyed equally by city dwellers and visitors of all income levels, ethnicities, and ages. People can live more comfortably in smaller apartments or condos when they have urban parks and other greenspace nearby. We can promote civic pride by creating more great public spaces in Austin. (An example is the City's Great Streets policy for Downtown, which provides people-friendly wide sidewalks, attractive landscaping, and seating.) Placemaking is a powerful economic development tool as well.

The activity centers and corridors in Austin's future will need to be designed as people-friendly places.





Austinites can come together to define a common vision for improving or creating a human-scaled place that they care about. The *Imagine Austin* vision supports development of active, inviting places with unique Austin flavor and character — fun to visit and welcoming for all.

Benefits of People-Friendly Places

- People-friendly public spaces bring people together and help create community.
- Private mixed-use developments that are created using good urban design and “placemaking” principles are more desirable, with enhanced value.
- People feel safer in clean, well-populated places with good lighting and amenities.
- We’re more likely to walk, bike, skateboard, or jog in people-friendly places.
- People-friendly places can help make Austin a healthy, sustainable, and economically viable city of the future.



The Spring Terrace apartments by Foundation Communities are an affordable community located in Northeast Austin. Photo courtesy of Foundation Communities.

HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS



Complete Community Matrix



LIVABLE

NATURAL AND
SUSTAINABLE

CREATIVE



EDUCATED



PROSPEROUS

MOBILE AND
INTERCONNECTEDVALUES AND
RESPECTS PEOPLE**FROM THE VISION STATEMENT -
AUSTIN IS LIVABLE:**

One of Austin's foundations is its safe, well-maintained, stable, and attractive neighborhoods and places whose character and history are preserved. Economically mixed and diverse neighborhoods across all parts of the city have a range of affordable housing options. All residents have a variety of urban, suburban, and semi-rural lifestyle choices with access to quality schools, libraries, parks and recreation, health and human services, and other outstanding public facilities and services.

Austin is a city of diverse neighborhoods that contribute to our community's character and our residents' quality of life. While these neighborhoods offer a mix of housing, single-family houses are the most common. The city has lower rates of homeownership than most other Texas cities. In addition, housing affordability is a major issue in Austin. Over the last 10 years, median housing costs have risen by 85 percent, while household incomes have remained stagnant or declined. Centrally located neighborhoods in east and south Austin have experienced reinvestment that has also led to increasing housing costs and has resulted in renters and some long-time residents having to move to more affordable neighborhoods. Consistent with other goals in the plan, preserving a wide range of household affordability is essential to preserving the character of neighborhoods.

National demographic trends and housing preferences could significantly impact the local housing market and affect the provision of public and health services. An increasing number of "Generation Y" or "Millennials"—born between 1980 and 1995—are entering the housing market. This group has demonstrated a demand for more urban lifestyles. In addition, the growing number of "Baby Boomers"—born between 1946 and 1964—retiring and downsizing their homes will also affect housing and social service needs.

In 1997, the City initiated the neighborhood planning program to protect, enhance, and ensure the stability of neighborhoods—mostly located in the urban core. Currently, 48 neighborhood planning areas have completed the planning process and have adopted neighborhood plans (see Appendix G). Challenges and opportunities unique to individual neighborhoods are met through the neighborhood planning process.

KEY ISSUES AND TRENDS:

- Austin's population is projected to almost double over the next 30 years, requiring new and redeveloped housing to accommodate the City's growing population.
- Austin still has strong patterns of racial, ethnic, and income segregation.
- Median housing and transportation costs are higher in Austin than most Texas cities.
- As the housing market has become more expensive, the location of affordable housing units has shifted to increasingly distant suburban areas, leading to more expensive transportation costs.
- Austin is a majority renter city, due in large part to the high number of college students, recent graduates, and an overall younger population.
- Higher housing costs and slower-growing incomes may prompt more families to rent rather than purchase a home.
- High demand for rental units translates into demand for housing types other than single-family detached houses.
- Infill development may be used to meet the growing demand for higher-density, closer-in affordable housing.

Austin must provide a range of energy and resource-efficient housing options and prices in all parts of the City to sustainably meet the housing needs of all segments of our diverse population. In addition, we need to sustain distinct, stable, and attractive neighborhoods that preserve and reinforce the livability, character, and special sense of place in Austin.

KEY CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

- Fostering mixed-use, mixed-income neighborhoods with a range of housing and transportation choices for our diverse population, community services, facilities, and amenities, in which Austinites can afford to live.
- Maintaining the unique and diverse character of Austin's neighborhoods, while meeting the market demands for close-in housing.
- Balancing new development and redevelopment in lower-income neighborhoods while maintaining the essential character of those neighborhoods.
- Making existing automobile-oriented neighborhoods more pedestrian and bicycle-friendly.
- Developing regulations that create better and context-specific transitions between more intense housing, commercial and office uses, mixed use development, and adjacent, established neighborhoods.
- Encouraging the preservation of affordable housing in neighborhoods across the city and in activity centers and corridors.
- Increasing the diversity of housing choices to reflect the needs of all types of households.
- Improving student stability by preserving existing affordable housing and increasing access to new affordable housing.
- Addressing the housing needs for the homeless and those who are about to become homeless.

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HOUSING POLICIES

HN P1. Distribute a variety of housing types throughout the City to expand the choices available to meet the financial and lifestyle needs of Austin’s diverse population.

(See also LUT P5, S P12)

HN P2. Expand the availability of affordable housing throughout Austin by preserving existing affordable housing, including housing for very low-income persons.

(See also LUT P10)

HN P3. Increase the availability of affordable housing, including housing for very low-income persons, through new and innovative funding mechanisms, such as public/private partnerships. (See also LUT P10, S P4, S P13, C P10)

HN P4. Connect housing to jobs, child care, schools, retail, and other amenities and services needed on a daily basis, by strategies such as:

- Directing housing and employment growth to sites appropriate for Transit Oriented Development.
- Coordinating and planning for housing near public transportation networks and employment centers to reduce household transportation costs and vehicle miles traveled. (See also LUT P3, LUT P6, LUT P12, S P22, C P9, C P10)

HN P5. Promote a diversity of land uses throughout Austin to allow a variety of housing types including rental and ownership opportunities for singles, families with and without children, seniors, persons with disabilities, and multi-generational families.

(See also LUT P5, S P13)

HN P6. Address accessibility issues and other housing barriers to persons with disabilities or special needs.

HN P7. Reuse former brownfields, greyfields and vacant building sites to reduce negative impacts of vacancy and provide new mixed use and/or housing options. (See also LUT P7, E P6)

HN P8. Encourage green practices in housing construction and rehabilitation that support durable, healthy, and energy-efficient homes.

(See also CE P11, CFS P22)

HN P9. Renovate the existing housing stock to reduce utility and maintenance costs for owners and occupants, conserve energy, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

(See also CFS P22)



Chestnut Commons, located in the Chestnut neighborhood, is a successful example of infill development.

BEST PRACTICE: COMMUNITY LAND TRUST | WASHINGTON, DC

A Community Land Trust is a private nonprofit corporation created to acquire and hold land for the benefit of a community and provide secure affordable access to land and housing for community residents. The New Columbia Community Land Trust, Inc. is a community-based land acquisition, housing development, and community education organization. The Land Trust serves as housing development coordinator/consultant to tenant groups seeking to exercise their “first-right-to-purchase” single-family or multifamily buildings when their landlords put them up for sale. In addition to a ground lease, the Land Trust provides tenant organization support, project feasibility, financial packaging and loan applications, architect and contractor selection, construction monitoring, and permanent financing and close-out.

Reference: <http://www.cdsc.org/ncclt/>.

In 2039, I would like Austin to be “a city with many small neighborhoods, each having a distinct, preserved character, that are affordable.”

Community Forum Series #1
Participant responding to the question “How has the city improved by 2039?”

I would like to see “self-sufficient neighborhood sustainability: mixed use throughout neighborhoods (walk to food/produce, daily needs, parks, everywhere).”

Community Forum Series #1
Participant

NEIGHBORHOODS POLICIES

HN P10. Create complete neighborhoods across Austin that have a mix of housing types and land uses, affordable housing and transportation options, and access to healthy food, schools, retail, employment, community services, and parks and recreation options.

(See also LUT P5, CFS P41, CFS P42)

HN P11. Protect neighborhood character by directing growth to areas of change and ensuring context sensitive infill in such locations as designated redevelopment areas, corridors, and infill sites. (See also LUT P4, LUT P7)

HN P12. Identify and assess the infrastructure needs of older neighborhoods and provide for improvements needed to maintain their sustainability. (See also LUT P30, E P6, CFS P2)

HN P13. Strengthen Austin’s neighborhoods by connecting to other neighborhoods, quality schools, parks, environmental features, and other community-serving uses that are accessible by transit, walking, and bicycling.

(See also LUT P15)

HN P14. Strengthen planning processes by recognizing that the Comprehensive Plan and small-area plans, such as neighborhood plans, corridor plans, and station area plans, need to respect, inform, and draw from each other.

HN P15. Protect neighborhood character by providing opportunities for existing residents who are struggling with rising housing costs to continue living in their existing neighborhoods.

(See also LUT P4)

BEST PRACTICE: PRESERVING AFFORDABLE HOUSING NEAR TRANSIT STATIONS | DENVER, CO

Denver is in the process of a major transit expansion that will include new light rail, bus rapid transit, and transit stations. Housing and transportation costs are high in the region and residents are willing to pay more to live close to transit stations, resulting in higher rents and home values. To specifically combat rising housing prices near transit, the City of Denver is working with public/private partners to create a Transit Oriented Development Fund with a goal of building or preserving more than 1,000 affordable units. In a recent success, the redevelopment of South Lincoln Homes (located across from an existing light rail station) will triple the number of affordable units on site and add amenities for residents. *Reference: Reconnecting America: Preserving Affordable Housing Near Transit, Enterprise, 2010; Photo Courtesy of Denver Housing Authority.*



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Neighborhoods should include a mix of housing types.

BEST PRACTICE: “THE WORLD’S GREENEST NEIGHBORHOOD”: SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AT DOCKSIDE GREEN | VICTORIA, BRITISH COLUMBIA

Built on the waterfront sites of a former paint factory and shipyard, Dockside Green is a 1.3 million square foot mixed-use development project that embodies best practices in sustainable design. At completion, Dockside Green will have approximately 2,500 residents, office and retail space, a central greenway and creek, and a waterfront park. The design promotes walkability and transit use, but its use of “green building” techniques and low impact design are its most notable features. Dockside Green is constructed of renewable, eco-friendly materials, and aims to reduce its energy footprint through an on-site sewage treatment plant and graywater reuse program, an on-site plant that uses local wood waste to generate heat and hot water, wind turbines, solar panels, green roofs, water- and energy-efficient appliances, and real-time unit energy meters that can be adjusted remotely. Other features include bioretention facilities, pervious paving, and innovative stormwater controls.

Named one of the top ten “green building” projects in 2009, the development has the distinction of achieving the world’s highest LEED Platinum scores and becoming the first LEED Neighborhood Development Platinum project. Reference: <http://www.theatlantic.com>;

Image Credit: Jay Scratch, Flickr, Creative Commons License.





The University of Texas at Austin, founded in 1883, is one of the largest and most respected universities in the nation. A diverse learning community, it has 51,000 students — from every state and more than 100 countries. The university provides superior and comprehensive educational opportunities at the baccalaureate through doctoral and special professional educational levels. Photo courtesy of Marsha Miller.

ECONOMY

Complete Community Matrix



LIVABLE



NATURAL AND
SUSTAINABLE



CREATIVE



EDUCATED



PROSPEROUS



MOBILE AND
INTERCONNECTED



VALUES AND
RESPECTS PEOPLE

Austin's economy has grown substantially over the last 20 years. Between 1990 and 2010, the city's labor force increased by more than 50 percent — more than twice the national rate. Despite strong population growth, Austin has maintained relatively low levels of unemployment due to strong business and job creation. Business formation has been particularly strong over the last decade, in part due to the city's entrepreneurial spirit and Texas' business-friendly economic environment. While Austin is home to many large, national and international employers, it is also home to a large number of small and local businesses that contribute both to our economic strength and the cultural vitality of area. In 2008, nearly 72 percent of business establishments in the Austin region had fewer than 10 employees.

Technology, medical, and institutional uses, such as higher education and government, form the base of Austin's economy. In recent years, the proportion of health care, management, arts, entertainment, and food service jobs have increased. In addition, Austin's technology sector has diversified and job growth is expected in high-tech computer and software employment, medicine and medical research, life sciences, clean energy, creative and technology industries, data centers, and professional services. The percentage of workers with college degrees continues to rise and is significantly higher than the rate for Texas.

As described in Core Principles for Action (Chapter 1), Austin must harness its strong economy to expand opportunity and social equity to all residents. The city must build a vibrant, resilient, and diverse economy that celebrates innovation and creativity, provides equitable opportunities for people, and protects the environment. Sustainability includes not only environmental stewardship and social equity, but also economic prosperity for Austin residents and businesses.

KEY ISSUES AND TRENDS:

- Between 1990 and 2010, Austin's labor force increased by more than 50 percent — more than twice the national rate.
- New retail and office development in surrounding communities is reducing Austin's share of those markets.
- Austin's highly-educated work-force makes the city attractive to high-growth companies seeking to relocate or establish operations in the Austin area.
- Austin continues to create professional and skilled service jobs. However, access to these jobs is limited for many minority groups and individuals with lower educational attainment.
- Austin's creative industries are a key to continued growth.
- Austin's lower wages (relative to other major U.S. cities) creates an impediment to attracting talented workers.
- Entrepreneurship and the ability of existing businesses to adapt to new technologies will continue to drive Austin's economy.
- Austin's natural beauty and climate is critical to the city's attractiveness for business and employees as we compete as a global city.
- Adapting to climate change impacts, such as increased summer temperatures and extended drought, that impose threats to Austin's economic competitiveness.

KEY CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

- Sustaining Austin's position as the economic hub of the Central Texas region.
- Ensuring that new employment growth can be accommodated in mixed use centers and corridors and other areas well-served by transit.
- Attracting and developing experienced, higher-level talent in high-growth industries.
- Working with educational institutions and business leaders to expand job training opportunities in areas such as business management, entrepreneurship, and health services to meet expected local industry demands and community needs.
- Creating well-paid jobs in the clean energy industry, particularly in solar manufacturing and installation, energy services provision, and green building.
- Reducing the number of obstacles facing local, small, and creative businesses, such as the availability of physical space for industry and business incubation, affordable commercial rents, education and training, health care, and housing options.
- Preserving small businesses that may be adversely affected by new development.
- Encouraging and supporting the stability and growth of local business to sustain our hometown business community, including the creative sector.
- Expanding Austin's economic base by positioning the city as a world-class medical research and technology center by establishing a medical school and residency programs.
- Increasing the number of well-paying jobs to allow more people to live and work in Austin in the face of rising costs.
- Preserving Austin's quality of life and expanding its image to more fully embrace its diversity of people, experiences, and opportunities.

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**FROM THE VISION STATEMENT -
AUSTIN IS PROSPEROUS:**

Austin's prosperity exists because of the overall health, vitality, and sustainability of the city as a whole — including the skills, hard work, and qualities of our citizens, the stewardship of our natural resources, and developing conditions that foster both local businesses and large institutions. Development carefully balances the needs of differing land uses with improved transportation to ensure that growth is both fiscally sound and environmentally sustainable.

In 2039, “my grand-children can remain in Austin with good, well-paying jobs.”

Community Forum Series #1
Participant responding to the question “How has the city improved by 2039?”

ECONOMIC POLICIES

E P1. Promote and measure business entrepreneurship, innovation, and a culture of creativity.

(See also C P1)

E P2. Implement policies that create, nurture, and retain small and local businesses and minority- and women-owned business.

(See also C P1, C P2)

E P3. Build on the Austin metropolitan area's position as a leader in global trade.

(See also C P7)

E P4. Continue to strengthen partnerships among Chambers of Commerce, state and local governments, and major employers, and leverage incentives to attract and retain major employers. (See also S P19)

E P5. Enhance Austin's draw as a premier national and international tourist destination by strengthening and diversifying the arts and entertainment offerings, enhancing natural resources, and expanding the availability of family-friendly events and venues.

(See also LUT P37, C P1, C P7)

E P6. Support up-to-date infrastructure, flexible policies and programs, and adaptive reuse of buildings, so local, small, and creative businesses thrive and innovate.

(See also LUT P8, HN P7, HN P12, C P8, C P15)

E P7. Promote Downtown as the premier business district in the region and expand the presence of global finance and trade.

(See also C P7)

BEST PRACTICE: TARGETED BUSINESS GROWTH | ASHEVILLE, NC

Greater Asheville, North Carolina established AshevilleHUB as a means to diversify its economy and introduce a new source of employment by focusing attention on the region's economic needs and assets.

Asheville capitalized on its strengths in government, business, academia, and the arts to target climate studies and the growing weather prediction industry, such as global information systems experts, meteorologists, air quality technicians, botanists, and digital media specialists. As a result of this initiative, Asheville is now home to the National Climatic Data Center, the National Environmental Modeling and Analysis Center, The Renaissance Computing Institute, the U.S. Forest Service's Southern Research Station, and the Air Force Combat Climatology Center.

In addition to the quality jobs emerging from the climate initiative, the industry has invested in telecommunications infrastructure necessary to process data emanating from high speed satellite feeds securely and reliably. Reference: <http://www.ashevillehub.com/>.

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E P8. Invest in, construct, and expand major multicultural facilities in Austin’s Downtown.

E P9. Establish a medical school and residency programs to spur medical and life science technology investments and meet the region’s growing needs for healthcare. (See also S P2)

E P10. Cluster or co-locate high schools, vocational schools, and colleges or universities near employment centers, such as healthcare facilities, biotech, and green technology facilities, to better connect students to potential employment opportunities.

(See also LUT P13, S P15, S P17)

E P11. Expand educational offerings and establish cooperative partnerships between Austin Community College, the University of Texas, and other institutions of higher learning to retain students and support target industries’ education and training requirements.

(See also LUT P13, S P15, CFE P17)

E P12. Engage major employers and institutions of higher education to provide leadership in meeting the needs of chronic unemployed and underemployed residents, such as people with disabilities and former clients of the criminal justice or foster care systems.

(See also S P15, S P16, S P18)

E P13. Promote “start-up districts” where new businesses benefit from locating near transportation infrastructure, services, suppliers, mentors, and affordable support facilities.

(See also C P9)

E P14. Improve regional transportation planning and financing for infrastructure, such as airports, rail, and roads, to ensure the reliable movement of goods and people.

(See also LUT P2)

E P15. Invest in sustainable, affordable utility sources (communications, power, water, wastewater) to meet the needs of increasing population and employment bases.

(See also CFS P2, CFS P21, CFS P24)

“By promoting local business and encouraging innovation within the city, we should strive to remain a highly desirable city.”

Community Forum Series #1
Participant

BEST PRACTICE: SMALL BUSINESS / START-UP INCUBATOR | SANTA FE, NM

The Santa Fe Business Incubator is a not-for-profit economic development organization and an entrepreneurial leader that provides a supportive environment for growing a business in a wide range of industries. It offers office, lab, and light manufacturing space with affordable short-term leases, plus onsite business workshops and seminars and access to the skill and support of its professional staff and experienced business advisors from the community.

Client companies receive exposure to best practices and enhanced financial networks, leading to faster growth and greater business success. Participants benefit from shared services and facilities, minimizing overhead costs and allowing valuable start-up capital to be used for expansion. Since the Santa Fe Business Incubator opened its doors in 1997, it has helped launch and grow more than 70 businesses.

Reference: <http://www.sfbincubator.com/>; Photo Courtesy of Santa Fe Business Incubator.



E P16. Expand connectivity within the Texas Triangle (Dallas/Fort Worth, Austin, San Antonio, and Houston) in order to facilitate movement of ideas, goods, and people for economic prosperity.

(See also LUT P18, LUT P19, LUT P20)

E P17. Invest in the region's people through long-term job training for living wage jobs.

(See also S P15, S P16, S P18)

E P18. Develop a sustainable local food system by encouraging all sectors of the local food economy, including production, processing, distribution, consumption, and waste recovery.

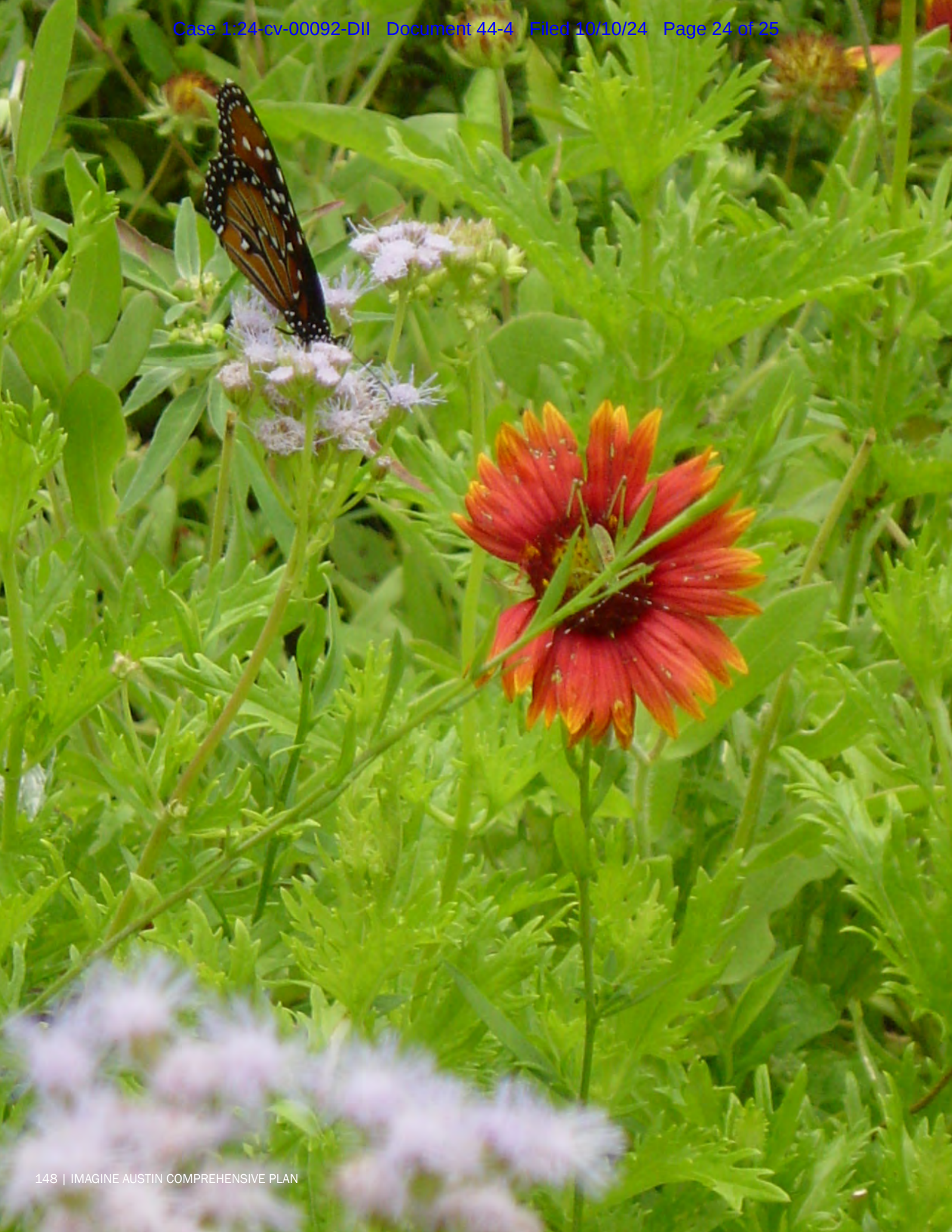
(See also CE P13, S P6, S P7)

E P19. Provide ongoing and coordinated digital services to meet the needs of the community by ensuring that all residents have access to internet connectivity, hardware availability, digital literacy training, and access to relevant information.





The three day Austin City Limits Festival attracts attendees from across the globe and contributed an estimated \$73 million in 2011 to the local economy.



CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENT

Complete Community Matrix



LIVABLE



NATURAL AND
SUSTAINABLE



CREATIVE



EDUCATED



PROSPEROUS



MOBILE AND
INTERCONNECTED



VALUES AND
RESPECTS PEOPLE

Austin is “a city that is environmentally healthy, that protects and acknowledges its land’s limits.”

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As one of the fastest growing regions in the U.S., a major challenge facing Austin and Central Texas is the protection of the region’s environmental resources, particularly its watersheds, waterways, water supply, air quality, open space, and urban tree canopy. These resources perform essential functions and provide vital benefits to the city and its residents. As development continues in or near environmentally sensitive areas, ongoing mitigation, preservation, and conservation efforts will be required.

Austin is located along the Colorado River, where it crosses the Balcones Escarpment, an area notable for its diversity of terrain, soils, habitats, plants, and animals. Austin and the region are known for the Colorado River, the Highland Lakes system, and creeks such as Bull Creek, Barton Creek, and Onion Creek. In addition, Barton Springs, the fourth largest spring in Texas, discharges an average of 27 million gallons of water a day from the Barton Springs Segment of the Edwards Aquifer. The springs feed Barton Springs Pool, one of the most popular and visited natural attractions in Central Texas.

Austin must conserve, protect, and support our natural resource systems by developing and adopting better practices for long-term stewardship of Austin’s environment.

FROM THE VISION STATEMENT - AUSTIN IS NATURAL AND SUSTAINABLE:

Austin is a green city. We are environmentally aware and ensure the long-term health and quality of our community through responsible resource use as citizens at the local, regional, and global level. Growth and infrastructure systems are well-managed to respect the limitations of our natural resources.